

REMARKS AND ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for graciously working with Applicants to understand the Examiner's interpretation of the cited documents. Such guidance is invaluable to both of us in our common goal of an expedited prosecution of this patent application.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims of the application. Claims 1-20 and 27-28 are presently pending. Claims amended herein are 1, 15-20 and 27-28. Claim 14 is canceled herein. No claims are added herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for allowing claim 13. This claim has not been amended herein, and therefore remains allowable.

Claims 15 and 28 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. See Action p. 2. Without conceding the propriety of the rejections herein and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants have rewritten claims 15 and 28 in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection to these claims.

Claim Amendments

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections herein and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants amend claims 1, 15-20 and 27-28 herein. Applicants amend claims to clarify claimed features. Such amendments are made to expedite prosecution and to more quickly identify allowable subject matter. Such amendments are merely intended to clarify the claimed features, and should not be construed as further limiting the claimed invention in response to the cited document.

SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS

Anticipation Rejections

The Examiner rejects claims 1-12, 17-20 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Mohler*, US Patent No. 5,506,872. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of these claims.

However, without conceding the propriety of the rejections herein and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants amend independent claim 1 herein to include the feature of "a memory for storing one or more addresses where said notification messages are to be sent." Applicants are unable to find, in *Mohler*, any disclosure, teaching or suggestion of at least this claimed feature.

Claims 2-12 ultimately depend upon independent claim 1. Since claim 1 is allowable, it is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from an allowable base claim is also allowable.

Further, Applicants amend independent claim 27 herein to include the feature of "wherein at least one of said plurality of notification messages includes changing the frequency of a dial tone of a telephone associated with the mailbox." Applicants are unable to find, in *Mohler*, any disclosure, teaching or suggestion of at least this claimed feature.

Dependent claims 17-20 have been amended to depend upon allowed claim 13. Since claim 13 has already been allowed, it is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from an allowed base claim is also allowable.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully ask the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of these claims.

Obviousness Rejections

The Examiner rejects claims 14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mohler. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of these claims.

However, without conceding the propriety of the rejections herein and in the interest of expediting prosecution of this application, Applicants cancel claim 14 herein and rejection to this claim is therefore moot.

In addition, Applicants amend claim 16 herein to depend upon independent claim 15, which has been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. See Action p. 2.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn, and the application be passed along to issuance.

Appl. No. 09/867,058
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Reply to Office Action dated March 5, 2010

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe that all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please contact me at your convenience.

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Respectfully submitted,



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